



Afternoon Alert - Friday, September 22, 2017

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## HEADLINES

### Noon news

Most networks gave top play to reports that North Korean leader Kim Jong Un released a statement through its state media today in response to President Trump's speech at the UNGA, in which he said he will consider the "highest level of hard-line countermeasure in history." The networks also reported that North Korean Foreign Minister Ri Yong Ho told reporters in New York that the North Korean leader might conduct a hydrogen bomb test in the Pacific Ocean.

## INTERNATIONAL

### U.S., Japan, ROK to hold vice foreign ministerial talks

Asahi reported online from Seoul that the vice foreign ministers of the U.S., Japan, and South Korea will probably assemble either in Tokyo or Seoul in mid-October to discuss the situation in North Korea by capitalizing on Deputy Secretary Sullivan's planned tour of East Asia next month. Explaining that this will be the first trilateral session of its kind under the Trump administration, the article projected that the three officials are likely to confirm taking a concerted approach to dealing with Pyongyang's relentless provocations.

### Foreign ministers of Japan, China discuss North Korea

NHK reported this morning that Foreign Minister Kono met with his Chinese counterpart Wang at the UN headquarters in New York on Thursday. The network said while Kono called for active steps from the Chinese side to increase pressure on North Korea, the Chinese minister reportedly claimed that China is fulfilling its international obligation "100%" and that dialogue is also important. Meanwhile, the network said the two ministers agreed that the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula is a shared goal and confirmed their plan to maintain close communication. In addition, Kono expressed hope to visit China as soon as possible and called for China's cooperation in

holding a trilateral summit between Japan, China, and South Korea within the year in Japan, to which the Chinese side responded positively. Meanwhile, the network also said Kono called on China to swiftly return all the Japanese citizens who have been taken into custody on espionage charges in China, adding that the Chinese side said it will respond appropriately in accordance with domestic law.

### **North Korean foreign minister hints at hydrogen bomb test in Pacific**

NHK reported this morning that in response to a statement released by North Korean leader Kim saying that he will carefully consider the "highest level of hard-line countermeasure" in response to President Trump's threat to "totally destroy" the country, North Korea's Foreign Minister Ri Yong Ho told reporters in New York that the country may conduct a hydrogen bomb test in the Pacific Ocean.

The network quoted Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga as telling reporters this morning in response to Kim Jong Un's statement: "It is clearly a provocative act against regional and global security and cannot be tolerated. Japan will do its best to protect the safety of its people by promoting security cooperation between Japan and the U.S. as well as Japan, the U.S., and South Korea in order to respond to any contingency."

The network quoted Defense Minister Onodera as telling reporters this morning: "North Korea has been talking about ICBMs and miniaturizing nuclear warheads. We can naturally assume that North Korea is attempting to test a miniaturized nuclear warhead on an ICBM or an intermediate-range ballistic missile. If North Korea has an ICBM that can deliver a miniaturized nuclear warhead, we cannot rule out the possibility that such a missile will fly over Japan."

- [N. Korean hydrogen bomb-tipped missile could fly over Japan](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Cut ties with N. Korea, Japan foreign minister urges world](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Japan to be a "beacon," not a "follower": foreign minister](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Japan, Germany vow to involve China, Russia in enforcing N. Korea sanctions](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Japan Disaster Relief team sent to Mexico](#) (Nikkei Evening edition)
- [Taiwan rail firm teams up with Japanese railroads to gain publicity](#) (Mainichi)
- [Japan signs deal with Brunei to facilitate speedy patent examinations](#) (Nikkei)
- [Ex-diplomat criticizes holding election amid North Korea crisis](#) (Asahi)
- [Why Russia is reluctant to put pressure on North Korea](#) (Shukan Toyo Keizai)

- [Editorial: With his U.N. speech, Trump shone intl spotlight on N. Korea's atrocities](#) (The Japan News)
- [Cartoon: Sanctions on North Korea](#) (Kanagawa Shimbun)
- [Cartoon: President Trump and Kim Jong Un](#) (Asahi)
- [Japan's defense ministry, police go hand-in-hand with NSA](#) (Sande Mainichi)
- [Japanese pro "baffled" by invitation to play golf with Abe and Trump](#) (Shukan Shincho)
- [Cartoon: The Rohingya](#) (Asahi)
- [Abe, Trump to speed up arrangements for Nov. Japan visit](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Former senior diplomat Ishikane appointed ambassador to Canada](#) (Kyodo News)
- [A-bomb exhibit mulled at Pearl Harbor memorial on 75th war anniv.](#) (Kyodo News)

<b>POLITICS</b>
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- [Prime minister's schedule on Sept. 20-21, 2017](#) (Nikkei)
- [Records of scandal-tainted "Moritomo Gakuen" could be restored](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Gov't considering allocating over 1 trillion yen to education from tax increase](#) (Mainichi)
- [Ruling bloc to pledge social security for "all generations" in election manifesto](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Abe to announce dissolution of Lower House on Sept. 25](#) (Mainichi)
- [DP to include restrictions on power to dissolve Lower House in campaign pledges](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Komeito frets over constitutional revision proposals in campaign pledges](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Ex-Trade Minister Hiranuma to retire from politics](#) (Mainichi)
- [Grandson of ex-PM Nakasone to run in Lower House poll](#) (Jiji Press)
- [Four-way rivalry among Aso, Kono, Motegi, Seko to dominate trade policy](#) (FACTA)
- [Four opposition parties to protest Lower House dissolution](#) (Asahi)

- [Cartoon: General election](#) (Mainichi)
- [Editorial: Snap election without Diet debate highlights Abe's desire to hide truth](#) (The Mainichi)

## ECONOMY

- [Toshiba seeks shareholders' blessing for memory sale](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Japan to speed growth of hydrogen refueling stations](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Toyota doubles foreign trainees to bolster managerial ranks](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Aso calls for stronger partnership between finance and IT](#) (Nikkei)
- [Hitachi High-Technologies to invest in American cancer diagnostic testing service company](#) (Nikkei)
- [Restrictions on import rice could accelerate consumers' turning away from Japan's staple](#) (Nikkei)

## SCIENCE

- [Environment Ministry to double Japan's contribution to IPCC](#) (Mainichi)

## SOCIETY

### More young Japanese getting hooked on caffeine

NHK's "Close-up Gendai+" reported that an increasing number of young Japanese are being rushed to the hospital after consuming too many high-caffeine drinks due to the growing popularity of energy drinks and tablets. The program said a total of 101 people were taken to the hospital over the last five years because of caffeine overdoses, and three of them died. According to the program, their average age was 25, and 95% of them took caffeine tablets that are available over the Internet. The program said many young Japanese consume caffeine drinks or tablets casually without understanding the risks and many become addicted without realizing it.

- [25% of female physicians work overtime beyond the threshold for karoshi, Japan Medical Association survey](#) (Mainichi Evening edition)
- [Record number of child porn victims threatened, duped into sending selfies to strangers](#) (The Mainichi)

## SECURITY

- [SDF missiles at Komatsu base found damaged](#) (Sankei)

#### OKINAWA LOCAL PRESS

### **Okinawa infuriated by parachute drop drills at Kadena**

Okinawa Times and Ryukyu Shimpo reported extensively on Thursday's daytime parachute training performed at Kadena Air Base's Ridout drop zone, emphasizing that this was the third time for such training to be conducted this year and it took place just one month after the Japanese side expressed concern during the 2+2 foreign and defense ministerial meeting held in Washington in mid-August. Governor Onaga told the press: "I'm enraged by the fact that it was undertaken despite the central government's request for its cancellation." He added that unless the SOFA is amended, the Okinawan people's lives and property cannot be defended. Insisting that Defense Minister Onodera's request to Defense Secretary Mattis for the U.S. military to refrain from conducting parachute training at Kadena was apparently ignored, Okinawa Times urged the GOJ to admit its "inability" to prevent even a single U.S. military drill.

In a related story, this morning's Tokyo Shimbun wrote that USFJ issued a statement yesterday justifying the use of the drop zone for parachute training by saying that "bilateral agreements allow for the use of Kadena as an alternate location when Ie Shima is not available."

